**Finding of No Significant Impact**

**for the**

**Implementation of Integrated Pest Management Plan**

**at
Fort Rucker, Alabama**

**Introduction**

This environmental assessment (EA) has been prepared for the U.S. Army Aviation Center of Excellence, Fort Rucker Garrison, and Directorate of Public Works to evaluate the effects of implementing an Integrated Pest Management Plan (IPMP) for U.S. Army (Army) Garrison Fort Rucker in Alabama. This EA has been prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and implementing regulations specified in 40 *Code of Federal Regulations* (CFR) Parts 1500 through 1508 and 32 CFR Part 651.

**Purpose and Need**

Integrated pest management is a sustainable approach to managing pests by combining biological, cultural, physical, and chemical tools in a way that minimizes economic, health, and environmental risks. The proposed IPMP is a guide designed specifically for the Fort Rucker installation and its managed areas to reduce reliance on pesticides and to enhance environmental protection; it reflects current DoD/Army policies, procedures and standards and incorporates the requirements of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the State of Alabama. Federal Agencies are mandated to use integrated pest management by Public Law (Section 136r-1 of title 7, United States Code). Army Regulation (AR) 200-5 requires all installations under ownership or control of the Department of the Army to prepare and implement an IPMP

**Description of the Proposed Action and Alternatives**

**Proposed Action**

The Fort Rucker Garrison proposes to adopt and implement an IPMP that provides an integrated and comprehensive method for managing pests on lands within the boundaries of, or under the control of Fort Rucker, Alabama. The proposed action defines roles and responsibilities for pest management at all levels within Fort Rucker and provides a uniform basis for addressing all applicable legal requirements and best management practices consistent with achievement of the needs, goals, and objectives of Fort Rucker’s military mission. Implementation of the IPMP would establish a formal mechanism to manage pests (plant, animal, or insect) at the Fort Rucker installation.

**No Action Alternative**

The No Action Alternative is the only alternative to the proposed action considered in this EA and consists of continuing the existing procedures. The No Action Alternative also serves as a benchmark against which the proposed action can be evaluated. The DOD and Army’s pest management program objective is to use an integrated pest management approach for the judicious use of both non-chemical and chemical control techniques to achieve effective pest control with minimal environmental impacts. There are no other alternatives considered in this EA that would meet this objective.

**Anticipated Environmental Effects**

As required by NEPA, this EA presents a comprehensive evaluation of the existing conditions and environmental consequences of implementing the Preferred Alternative and No Action Alternative. The EA evaluated three categories of potential environmental impacts: direct, indirect, and cumulative. Table 1 below summarizes the assessment of the alternatives and their impact on environmental resources.

**Table 1** **Comparison of the Potential Effects on the Evaluated Alternatives**

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| **Resource** | **Preferred Alternative****Environmental Consequences** | **No Action Alternative****Environmental Consequences** |
| Land Use | No Impact | No Impact |
| Air Quality | Potential for negligible short-term from release of pesticides to the air. | No Impact |
| Noise | Potential for minor, short-term noise impacts site-specific increases in noise levels if powered equipment or bird control noise devises are used for outside pest management practices. | No Impact |
| Geologic and Topographic Conditions | No Impact  | No Impact  |
| Soils | Potential for Short-term, Minor adverse effects from mechanical weed removal and chemical contamination of soils. Mechanical removal of vegetation would be controlled by reseeding. Chemical contamination would be minimized by using least-toxic pesticides.  | Long Term, Moderate impacts due to repeated uses of non-managed pesticides. |
| Floodplains | Minor impacts to floodplains, such as erosion and soil and water contamination, could occur if chemical and non-chemical pest control techniques are improperly applied. To minimize potential impacts, buffer zones around floodplains would be implemented and no activities, such as the mechanical removal of pests or the application of aquatic herbicides, would occur in floodplains unless specifically approved by the agency with legal jurisdiction. | This alternative will have a negative impact on water resources because it is not an integrated method and would be anticipated to use more pesticides. Repeated outdoor applications of pesticides can cause residues to build up, leading to potential water contamination. |
| **Resource** | **Preferred Alternative****Environmental Consequences** | **No Action Alternative****Environmental Consequences** |
| Wetlands | The IPMP could have minor, positive site-specific impacts on wetlands. Buffer zones around wetlands would be established and no activities would occur in wetlands or unless specifically in accordance with manufacturer's label and EPA guidance. | A negative impact on water resources a nonintegrated method and would be anticipated to use more pesticides. Repeated outdoor applications of pesticides can cause residues to build up, leading to potential water contamination. |
| Surface Water | Potential for Negligible short-term Minor impacts to surface water, such as erosion and soil and water contamination, could occur if chemical and non-chemical pest control techniques are improperly applied. To minimize potential impacts, buffer zones around floodplains would be implemented and no activities, such as the mechanical removal of pests or the application of aquatic herbicides, would occur in floodplains unless specifically approved by the agency with legal jurisdiction. | This alternative will have a negative impact on water resources because it is not an integrated method and would be anticipated to use more pesticides. Repeated outdoor applications of pesticides can cause residues to build up, leading to potential water contamination. |
| Groundwater | No Impact | No Impact |
| Stormwater | Potential for Negligible short-term Minor impacts to stormwater, such as erosion and soil and water contamination, could occur if chemical and non-chemical pest control techniques are improperly applied. To minimize potential impacts, no activities, such as the mechanical removal of pests or the application of aquatic herbicides, would occur in unless specifically approved by the agency with legal jurisdiction. | This alternative will have a negative impact on water resources because it is not an integrated method and would be anticipated to use more pesticides. Repeated outdoor applications of pesticides can cause residues to build up, leading to potential water contamination. |
| Vegetation | The IPMP would have a minor positive effect upon biological resources. It contains procedures whereby all pest management activities clearly define the target species and designate the specific actions to control those species. Pesticide types, amounts and application would be controlled in order to only treat a specific type of pest. No pest management operations would be conducted that have the potential to negatively affect endangered or protected species or their habitats without prior coordination with the USFWS.  | A long-term minor negative cumulative impact on future pest management because it may be necessary to apply more pesticides in the future to obtain the same level of control.  |
| **Resource** | **Preferred Alternative****Environmental Consequences** | **No Action Alternative****Environmental Consequences** |
| Wildlife | The IPMP would have a minor positive effect upon biological resources. It contains procedures whereby all pest management activities clearly define the target species and designate the specific actions to control those species. Pesticide types, amounts and application would be controlled in order to only treat a specific type of pest. No pest management operations would be conducted that have the potential to negatively affect endangered or protected species or their habitats without prior coordination with the USFWS.  | A long-term minor negative cumulative impact on future pest management because it may be necessary to apply more pesticides in the future to obtain the same level of control. In addition, pesticides can bioaccumulate in animals eating the pests and plants that have been treated with pesticides and any increase in pesticide use could potentially result in an increase in the amount of pesticides bioaccumulated in those animals. |
| Special-Status Species | The IPMP would have a minor positive effect upon biological resources. It contains procedures whereby all pest management activities clearly define the target species and designate the specific actions to control those species. Pesticide types, amounts and application would be controlled in order to only treat a specific type of pest. No pest management operations would be conducted that have the potential to negatively affect endangered or protected species or their habitats without prior coordination with the USFWS.  | A long-term minor negative cumulative impact on future pest management because it may be necessary to apply more pesticides in the future to obtain the same level of control. In addition, pesticides can bioaccumulate in animals eating the pests and plants that have been treated with pesticides and any increase in pesticide use could potentially result in an increase in the amount of pesticides bioaccumulated in those animals. |
| Cultural Resources | No Impact | No Impact |
| Environmental Justice | A minor positive effect on the local residents because there would be less health problems and lower health care costs. | No Impact |
| Protection of Children | A minor positive effect on the children because there would be less health problems and lower health care costs. | No Impact |
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| **Resource** | **Preferred Alternative****Environmental Consequences** | **No Action Alternative****Environmental Consequences** |
| Hazardous and Toxic Substances | A minor positive impact by reducing the quantity of hazardous and toxic waste/materials purchased and stored. Implementing an integrated approach to pest management will limit the amount of pesticide purchased and mixed for a specific application, thus reducing the amount of residual waste generated. The IPMP only allows pesticides that are least-toxic to the environment to be used. | A minor negative impact since the quantity of pesticides purchased and stored would not be reduced. |
| Cumulative Impacts | No Impact | No Impact |

**Public Review and Comments**

The EA and a Draft FNSI will be available to the public for a 30-day public comment period from 3 September to 5 October 2018. The Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Final EA and Draft FNSI will be published in Fort Rucker Army Flier, The Dothan Eagle and the Enterprise Leger in accordance with the Army NEPA Regulation (32 CFR Part 651.36). The Final EA and Draft FNSI was also available at the following local libraries:

• Fort Rucker Center Library

• Daleville Library

In addition, the documents are posted on the NEPA Program Page of the Sustainable Fort Rucker website: https://www.fortrucker-env.com/. The NOA has also been mailed to all agencies/individuals/organizations on the Fort Rucker NEPA distribution (mailing) list for the Proposed Action. Based on comments received during the public review period, revisions will be made before the final EA and FNSI are signed. Comments will be addressed and incorporated into the Final EA.

**Finding of No Significant Impact**

I have considered the results of the analysis in the EA, comments received within the public review period, and Fort Rucker’s needs. Based on these factors, I have decided to implement Proposed Alternative (Preferred Alternative) at Fort Rucker by allowing the Implementation of an Integrated Pest Management Plan. Implementation of the Preferred Alternative will not have a significant impact on the quality of human life or natural environment.

This analysis fulfills the requirements of NEPA, as implemented by the CEQ regulations (40 CFR 1500- 1508), as well as the requirements of the Environmental Analysis of Army Actions (32 CFR 651). Therefore, issuance of a FNSI is warranted and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not necessary.

Reviewed and Approved by:

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| Date  | BRIAN E. WALSHCOL, AV Garrison Commander  |